



The University of Michigan
Department of Recreational Sports
Intramural Sports Program

RACQUETBALL RULES

I. INTRAMURAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

(NOTE: Listed below is a synopsis of important Intramural Policies and Procedures. For a more detailed explanation, please refer to the Intramural Sports Program Manager's Manual, which can be found on our website at www.recsports.umich.edu/intramurals.)

A. ROSTER AND ROSTER ADDITIONS

1. **Tournaments:** A team's roster is built over the course of the preliminary rounds of the tournament. As in team sports, the individuals listed on the scorecards constitute a team's roster. Managers are responsible for the completeness and accuracy of the scorecards. In tournament events, roster additions may be made through the quarter-final games.

B. ELIGIBILITY

1. **Checking ID's:** Before a contest, event, or activity, all members of a team shall present to the official their pictured Student ID card. The official shall then verify the participant's identity and so note on the scorecard. Those players listed on the scorecard and verified by an official are considered to have participated in that contest. Should a participant arrive at the contest after it has started, the participant assumes the responsibility to have his/her identity verified by the official during a stoppage of play. Should a player not be verified by an official, that individual shall be considered an ineligible player.
2. **Forgotten ID Policy:** If a player forgets his or her ID, the following procedure will be followed:
 - a. The player must present a form of pictured ID (i.e. state driver's license, state identification, etc.) to the sport supervisor.
 - b. The sport supervisor shall complete an Intramural Forgotten ID Form and give that form to the participant.
 - c. The participant shall present the completed Intramural Forgotten ID Form along with his/her ID to the game official for verification.
 - d. The player must come in the next working day between 9:00am and 4:30pm with their valid student ID to verify that they are an eligible participant in the Intramural Sports Program. Failure to do so shall result in a forfeit against the violating team.

C. FORFEITS:

1. A team not ready to play (or failing to appear) at the designated day, date, time, and location of the scheduled contest will forfeit that contest.
2. In order to be credited for the forfeit "win," the team receiving the forfeit "win" for the contest must have the minimum number of required players to start a game.

NOTE: Both teams are recommended to list the players present at the game site in order to have those players considered as having "participated" in that game.

3. A team may waive the right to forfeit and wait for the opposing team to arrive.
 - If a team decides to wait the 10 minutes for the opposing team to show they **must wait the entire 10 minutes**.
 - If 10 minutes after the scheduled game time passes, and the minimum number of players required to play for the opposing team has not arrived, the team present **must accept** the forfeit.
 - Should the opposing team arrive before the 10-minute time limit, the contest shall be played. The time lost shall not be made up.
 - If a team waives their right to a win by forfeit, and the match begins, that team cannot rescind their decision and take the forfeit.
 - If at game time neither teams have the minimum number required to play the officials will wait 10 minutes to see if either or both teams acquire enough participants to play or accept the forfeit.

D. SPORTSMANSHIP RATINGS

1. Each team in each contest shall be rated by the Intramural Staff. A team begins an intramural game or event with a total of 10 sportsmanship points. During the course of the contest, teams may lose points if their behavior deteriorates.
2. Level 1 Sportsmanship Infraction: For each Sportsmanship infraction a team receives, one point will be deducted.
3. Level 2 Sportsmanship Penalty: For each Sportsmanship Penalty a team receives, three points will be deducted.
4. Level 3 Sportsmanship Ejection: For each Sportsmanship Ejection a team receives, seven points will be deducted.
5. Forfeits: Forfeiting a contest shall result in a seven point deduction.
6. In tournament play should a team's actions cause that team to receive a SRS rating of less than seven (7), the game will immediately be discontinued; the opposing team will be declared the winner of the game; and the declared winner will advance to the next round in the tournament. The declared winner must not have a SRS rating of less than seven.

Level 1: Sportsmanship Infraction (1 point deduction)	- Any verbal warning that addresses conduct
Level 2: Sportsmanship Penalty (3 point deduction)	- Alcohol use by spectators - Spectator interference
Level 3: Sportsmanship Ejection (7 point deduction)	- Alcohol use by player - Physical contact with an official - Fighting - Intentionally injuring or attempting to injure an opponent - Threatening/Verbal abuse of an official - Use of an ineligible player - Use of a suspended player - Forfeiting a game

II. SPORT RULES

A. THE GAME

1. In Team Racquetball, a team consists of two singles players plus a doubles team. Three players are needed to avoid a forfeit. Should a team play with three players, the team shall play the doubles match and one singles match; the other singles match shall be defaulted to the other team. Sportsmanship points are not lost for only playing with three players. In Co-Rec play, the mixed doubles match and either men's or women's singles match must be played.
2. Points and outs: Points are scored only by the serving side when it serves an ace or wins a volley. When the serving side loses a volley it loses the serve. Losing the serve is called an "OUT" in singles, and a "HAND-OUT" in doubles.
3. A game is won by the first side scoring 15 points. A team must win by 2 points with a maximum of 17 points per game. In cases where the score is tied at 16 points, the next point scored would win the game.
4. A match is won by the side first winning two out of three games.
6. Team records shall be kept based on the total number of games won and lost. For example, a team winning two matches and losing one would have a record of 2-and-1. In order to qualify for "A" playoffs, a team must have a record of 0.500 or above.

B. EQUIPMENT

1. Only a US Regulation racquetball (usually blue) can be used in Intramural play. International racquetballs (usually bright green) cannot be used. Players may check out racquetballs from the Intramural Sports Building Equipment Room.
2. Racquets can be checked out from the Intramural Sports Building Equipment Room for a fee.
3. Racquets are required to have a safety strap and they must be used.
4. The use of protective eye goggles is highly recommended.

C. PLAY REGULATIONS

1. Serve (Singles)
 - a. ORDER: The player or side winning the toss becomes the first server and starts the first game, and the third game.
 - b. PLACE: The server may serve from any place in the service zone. No part of either foot may extend beyond either line of the service zone. Stepping on the line (but not beyond) is permitted. Server must remain in the service zone until the served ball passes the short line. Violations are called "FOOT- FAULTS".
 - c. MANNER: A serve is commenced by bouncing the ball to the floor in the service zone, and on the first bounce the ball is struck by the server's racquet so that it hits the front wall and on the rebound hits the floor back of the short line, either with or without touching one of the side walls.
2. Serve (Doubles)
 - a. ORDER: Only the first server serves the first time up and continues to serve first throughout the game. When the first server is out - the side is out. Thereafter, both players on each side shall serve until a hand-out occurs. It is not necessary for the server to alternate serves to the opponents.
 - b. PARTNERS POSITION: On each serve, the server's partner shall stand erect with their back to the side wall and with both feet on the floor within the service box until the served ball passes the short line. Violations are called "FOOT FAULTS".

3. Dead Ball Serves

Dead ball serves occur when an otherwise legal serve:

- a. **HITS PARTNER:** Hits the server's partner on the fly on the rebound from the front wall while the server's partner is in the service box. Any serve that touches the floor before hitting the partner in the box is short.
- b. **SCREEN BALLS:** Passes too close to the server or the server's partner to obstruct the view of the returning side. Any serve passing behind the server's partner and the side wall is an automatic screen.
- c. **COURT HINDERS:** Hits any part of the court that under local rules is a dead ball.

4. Fault Serves

The following serves are faults and any two in succession results in a "HAND-OUT".

- a. A foot fault results:
 1. When the server leaves the service zone before the served ball passes the short line.
 2. When the server's partner leaves the service box before the served ball passes the short line.
- b. A short serve is any served ball that first hits the front wall and on the rebound hits the floor in front of the back edge of the short line either with or without touching one side wall; or:
- c. A two-side serve is any ball served that first hits the front wall and on the rebound hits two-side walls on the fly.
- d. A ceiling serve is any served ball that touches the ceiling after hitting the front wall either with or without touching one side wall.
- e. A long serve is any served ball that first hits the front wall and rebounds to the back wall before touching the floor.
- f. Any ball going out of the court on the serve.

5. Out Serves

Any one of the following serves results in a "HAND-OUT":

- a. Any attempt to strike the ball on the first bounce that results either in a total miss or in touching any part of the server's body other than their racquet.
- b. Any served ball that strikes the server's partner, or the ceiling, floor or side wall, before striking the front wall.
- c. Any served ball that on the rebound from the front wall touches the server or touches the server's partner while any part of their body is out of the service box, or the server's partner intentionally catches the served ball on the fly.
- d. In doubles, when either partner serves out-of-order.
- e. If the served ball hits the crotch in the front wall it is considered the same as hitting the floor and is an out.

6. Return to Serve

- a. The receiver or receivers must stand at least FIVE feet back of the serving line, as indicated by the THREE inch vertical line on each side wall, and cannot return the ball until it passes the back serving line. Any infraction results in a point for the server.
- b. To eliminate any misunderstanding, receiving side should not catch or touch a defectively served ball until it has touched the floor the second time.
- c. In making a fly return the receiver must end up with both feet back of the service zone. A violation by a receiver is a point for the server.
- d. After the ball is legally served, one of the players on the receiving side must strike the ball with their racquet either on the fly or after the first bounce and before the ball touches the floor the second time, to return the ball to the front wall either directly or after touching one or both side walls, the back wall or the ceiling, or any combination of those surfaces. A returned ball may not touch the floor before touching the front wall.
- f. The failure to return a serve results in a point for the server.

7. Volleys

Each legal return after the serve is called a volley. Play during volleys shall be according to the following rules:

- a. Only the head of the racquet may be used at any time to return the ball. The ball must be hit with the racquet in one or both hands. Switching hands to hit a ball is an out. The use of any portion of the body is an out.
- b. In attempting returns, the ball may be touched only once by one player or returning side. In doubles both partners may swing at, but only one, may hit the ball. Each violation of “A” or “B” results in a hand-out or point.
- c. If a player swings at but misses the ball in play, the player (or their partner in doubles) may repeat their attempts to return the ball until it touches the floor the second time.
- d. Any touching of a ball before it touches the floor the second time by a player other than the one making the return is a point or out against the offending player.
- e. Out-of-Court Ball
 1. After Return: Any ball returned to the front wall which on the rebound or on the first bounce goes into the gallery or through any opening in a side wall shall be declared dead and the serve replayed.
 2. No Return: Any ball not returned to the front wall, but which caroms off a player’s racquet into the gallery or into any opening in a side wall either with or without touching the ceiling, side or back wall, shall be an out or point against the players failing to make the return.
- f. Play Stoppage
 1. If a player loses a shoe or other equipment, or foreign objects enter the court, or any other outside interference occurs, play shall stop.
 2. If a player loses control of their racquet, time should be called after the point has been decided, providing the racquet does not strike an opponent or interfere with ensuing play.

8. Dead Ball Hinders

- a. The following are dead ball hinders:
 1. Court Hinders: Hits any part of the court which under local rules is a dead ball.
 2. Hitting Opponent: Any return that touches an opponent on a fly before it returns to the front wall.
 3. Body Contact: Any body contact with an opponent that interferes with seeing or returning the ball.
 4. Screen Ball: Any ball rebounding from the front wall close to the body of a player on the side which just returned the ball, to interfere with or prevent the returning side from seeing the ball.
 5. Straddle Ball: A ball passing between the legs of a player on the side which just returned the ball, if there is no fair chance to see or return the ball.
 6. Other Interference: Any other unintentional interference which prevents an opponent from having a fair chance to see or return the ball.
 7. Dead ball hinders result in the point being replayed.
- b. A call of a “Hinder” stops the play and voids any situation following such as the ball hitting a player. No player is authorized to call a hinder, except on the back swing and such a call must be made immediately.
- c. While making an attempt to return the ball, a player is entitled to a fair chance to see and return the ball. It is the duty of the side that has just served or returned the ball to move so that the receiving side may go straight to the ball and not be required to go around an opponent.

- d. Both players on a side are entitled to a fair and unobstructed chance at the ball and either one is entitled to a hinder even though it naturally would be their partner's ball or that they may already have missed it. It is not a hinder when one player interferes with their partner.
9. Avoidable Hinders
 - a. The following are examples of Avoidable Hinders:
 1. Does not move sufficiently to allow opponent their shot.
 2. Moves into a position effecting a block on the opponent about to return the ball, or in doubles, one partner moves in front of an opponent as their partner is returning the ball, or :
 3. Moves in the way and is struck by the ball just played by their opponent.
 4. Deliberately pushing or shoving an opponent during a volley.
 - b. An avoidable hinder results in an "Out" or a point depending upon whether the offender was serving or receiving.
 10. Rest Periods
 - a. Deliberate delay exceeding Ten seconds by server, or receiver shall result in an out or point against the offender.
 - b. During a game each player in singles or each side in doubles, either while serving or receiving may request a "Time out" for a towel, wiping glasses, change or adjustment. Each "time out" shall not exceed 30 seconds. No more than Three "time outs" in a game shall be granted each singles players or each team in doubles.
 - c. No "time out" shall be charged to a player who is injured during play. If an injured player is not able to resume play after total rests of 15 minutes the match shall be awarded to the opponent or opponents.
 - d. A two minute rest period is allowed between all games.